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Creating task-centered instruction for web-based instruction: Obstacles and solutions.

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Summary: Merrill proposes First Principles of Instruction, including a problem- or task-centered strategy for designing instruction. However, when the tasks or problems are ill-defined or complex, task-centered instruction can be difficult to design. We describe an online task-centered training at a land-grant university designed to train employees to use Banner, an administrative suite supporting student, financial aid, finance, HR, and advancement systems. Our training solution, housed in Blackboard Vista, includes desktop capturing application screencasts, interactive HTML, and Flash. We present several obstacles in designing and developing the training, including (1) implementing effective technology solutions, (2) identifying, analyzing, and documenting real-world tasks, and (3) creating a systematic process for design. We describe our solutions and prescribe methods for designing a course with a task-centered instructional strategy.

Classification: U50 R30 Q90

Keywords: CAI; computer as educational medium; educational software; independent study; programmed instruction; internet; intelligent tutoring systems; application-oriented teaching; man machine communication; constructivism; independent study; applied computer science
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